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SUBJECT: LESOTHO: SPEAKER PROGRAM EVALUATION - DR. CHUEN-YEN LAU,
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11. SUMMARY: From June 18-22, Embassy Maseru hosted international speaker Dr. Chuen-Yen Lau, an HIV/AIDS vaccine researcher from the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Lau's speaking ability, magnetic personality, and clear grasp of her subject matter made this an excellent program on a topic of overwhelming importance in Lesotho - a nation with the third highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in the world. Dr. Lau persevered in the face of difficult circumstances as Maseru experienced a restrictive curfew due to a political crisis, forcing many of her events to be rescheduled at late notice. If Dr. Lau is available for further speaking engagements, other missions would be very fortunate to receive her services. END SUMMARY.

12. Below is Embassy Maseru's official review of Dr. Lau's program.

1A. NAME OF SPEAKER/DVC/TPC GUEST AND DATE OF PROGRAM

Dr. Chuen Yen Lau of the National Institutes of Health conducted an HIV/AIDS-related speaker program in Maseru, Lesotho, on June 18-22, 2007.

1B. BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TOPICS/VENUES/AUDIENCES ADDRESSED

Dr. Lau discussed the HIV/AIDS pandemic generally, HIV/AIDS vaccine research, male circumcision, and HIV treatment options. Among other venues, she gave presentations at:

- The National University of Lesotho (audience: HIV/AIDS Task Force)
- The U.S. Embassy's Public Diplomacy Room (audiences: doctors and health workers, civil society, HIV/AIDS home-based care support groups, U.S. Embassy staff)
- Makoanyane Military Hospital (Military HIV/AIDS Team)

1C. AUDIENCE SIZE

Dr. Lau directly addressed 100-200 individuals, and reached many more through mass media outreach (see below). General audience numbers were somewhat lower than anticipated due to general uncertainty surrounding Lesotho's security situation during the political impasse. However, a June 21 session for local medical professionals was packed to capacity, and double the number of expected physicians attended.

1D. EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SPEAKER IN COMMUNICATION OF INTENDED MESSAGES TO TARGET AUDIENCE

Dr. Lau's topic presentations were well received by local

audiences. Her insights on HIV/AIDS vaccine development were met with great enthusiasm, and one presentation attendee summed up the feelings of her colleagues as "surprise and enlightenment." Her presentations included practical and clear examples, and she consistently went out her way to engage audiences in the active discussion of issues. She was able to effectively explain difficult scientific concepts pertaining to HIV/AIDS vaccine research to groups without medical expertise, including those in communities affected daily by HIV/AIDS.

1E. QUALITY OF IIP SUPPORT

Excellent. As a PD-light post with limited resources, Embassy Maseru is extremely happy to have been offered this opportunity. We received timely updates regarding Dr. Lau's schedule and were generally pleased with the quality of support from Washington.

1F. IMMEDIATE RESULTS / IMPACT

As addressing public health issues, and specifically the HIV/AIDS crisis, is Embassy Maseru's number one strategic goal, this program was directly in line with mission priorities. This program fulfilled two objectives: 1) to better inform Lesotho's medical and support groups about the HIV/AIDS pandemic; and 2) to highlight the role of the United States as a leader in HIV/AIDS research efforts. This program fulfilled both of these objectives admirably. Dr. Lau reached out to diverse groups involved in the fight against AIDS. She emphasized the importance of research in evaluating and augmenting the efforts to fight the disease. We hope that as result of this program more of Lesotho's health institutions will take advantage of cutting edge U.S. research in their bids to fight HIV in Africa.

1G. PRESS PLACEMENT REPORTING

Embassy Maseru arranged an interview with Dr. Lau on Lesotho Television (LTV), the nation's sole domestic television station. The interview was broadcast on June 21, and directly addressed

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the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Lesotho, American HIV/AIDS research, and the work of the National Institutes of Health. We estimate the viewership of LTV at approximately 30,000.
MURPHY